

already rejected by the elected representatives of the American people, the House and the Senate, so-called SOPA and PIPA.

These intellectual property restrictions in this agreement, it is rumored, will far exceed those already rejected, yet they would be binding on the United States of America, again going around our elected representatives.

It is also rumored that the U.S. pharmaceutical industry is seeking to roll back previous reforms that even George Bush negotiated in the U.S.-Peru FTA that enhanced access to affordable medicines. The pharmaceutical industry doesn't like inexpensive, affordable, life-saving medicines. That would be rolled back.

Further, it would allow drug companies to challenge the price formularies in Canada. Remember, U.S. citizens can buy drugs made by U.S. companies in the U.S. much more cheaply in Canada than here because the Canadian government negotiates on their behalf. It's rumored that this agreement would force Canada to raise their drug prices.

It is also rumored that it might actually prohibit the United States Government from negotiating or allowing under part D Medicare—pharmaceutical companies and insurance companies are involved but the insurance companies can negotiate under authority of law lower drug prices. It may also prohibit the drug formulary for Medicaid which saves hundreds of millions and billions of dollars a year, and the VA, which provides our veterans with low-cost pharmaceuticals.

All of those things may be preempted by this Trans-Pacific Partnership.

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Now, this is really an extraordinary thing that this is being done in secret and no Member of Congress is allowed to review it.

It has one chapter we know about, which is so egregious that Australia has said they have to have a total exemption. And the U.S. has said, sure, okay. We understand you want to protect your people. We'll let you do that, but we don't want to protect ours.

This is a little provision, similar to NAFTA, which gives corporations the power to challenge in foreign tribunals—not U.S. courts—our domestic laws that protect consumers and the environment. We would now give this authority to corporations, if China accesses to this, that are run by the Communist Government of China because they own many of the corporations in their country. The People's Liberation Army owns those corporations.

This is extraordinary. Six hundred corporations have access to this document, but no Member of Congress has access to this document, and yet this is the trade future. This is the 21st century trade agreement, we're told by this administration.

Further, the chief negotiator for the United States has said it's his greater desire that China become part of this

because then China would be bound by these rules. Oh, yeah, I heard that before. We used to vote annually on China's trade performance and we had a stick called "most-favored-nation status." When we gave up that stick—I voted against it—we gave them permanent most-favored-nation status, then they could join the World Trade Organization. But they said, don't worry, now they'll have to follow the rules. Guess what? They don't. And if they get in this agreement, they won't follow the rules either.

Kiss our economy good-bye if this secret agreement goes through.

### FARM BILL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from South Dakota (Mrs. NOEM) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. NOEM. Mr. Speaker, as we approach the end of this week, we come even closer to the date on which our farm bill will expire, which is on September 30, in just a short period of time.

Yesterday, we had a rally here on the Capitol grounds that hundreds of farmers from across the Nation came together and talked about the importance of doing a farm bill now. That was the driving theme because we recognize the responsibility that farmers across this Nation have to feed our families and to make sure that they have food that they can put on the tables across this world.

Recently, I received a letter from some producers in South Dakota. Myron and Mary are real people, and they live near Wall, South Dakota. I wanted to read this letter for you today. They have a farming and ranching operation that they have had since 1969 near the Badlands of South Dakota. They farm around 750 acres of corn and wheat in South Dakota, and like many producers, they're struggling through this drought that has afflicted our country. I want to read a portion of that letter to you:

Our area was designated extreme drought early July. The corn usually yields 60 bushels per acre; wheat, 50 bushels per acre; safflower, 1,200 pounds per acre; alfalfa, 1 ton per acre. This year, the corn was cut for hay and silage, the safflower yielded half, and the alfalfa was next to nothing. We usually raise enough hay to meet our needs. To date, we have spent \$120,000 to buy hay, and we still need more.

The farm bill is important to our operation in two areas in particular: Number one, crop insurance that is all inclusive (hail, fire, drought); and, number two, disaster assistance as provided in the last farm bill but expired last year. Disaster assistance is desperately needed now due to the drought.

It is the time of year to plant wheat and to wean calves, which we will do. We don't know if it will rain, but if we knew that a farm bill was in place, we could make the decisions whether to maintain our cowherd numbers and if we plant crop. Please pass a farm bill before the end of the year.

I want you to take a look at this picture that's next to me that is a corn-

field in South Dakota. It was taken a while ago. If you would look at this field, traditionally, when this picture was taken, that corn should be lush and green; it would be setting ears, it would be building test weight, and it would be ready for harvest. Instead, these stalks are falling over due to the drought. They weren't able to provide much in growth and are struggling. This corn, more than likely, will be cut for silage—for feed for cattle—instead of returning on the investment for the producers that planted it hoping to get a crop.

We need to give Myron and Mary and producers such as those that own this corn and their families that depend on the food grown in this country the certainty of a farm bill. We cannot wait for the next disaster. We need to do our job. We need to continue to provide for our families across this country that need affordable food policies and depend upon this country and the security that a strong food program can bring them through doing a farm bill now.

### POVERTY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE) for 5 minutes.

Ms. LEE of California. Mr. Speaker, as cofounder of the Congressional Out of Poverty Caucus, I rise today to call for an immediate response to the ongoing crisis of poverty in our Nation.

The census numbers released yesterday underscore the urgent need to act boldly and to create jobs in this country, to protect our safety net, and to target resources where they are needed—basically, to communities of color, low-income communities, those communities, rural areas, who were hit hardest by the economic downturn.

It's really beyond shameful that over 45 million Americans, including over 16 million children, are living in poverty in the wealthiest nation in the world. The data also shows a wide racial disparity, with the poverty rates for whites standing at 9.8 percent, while the rates for African Americans and Hispanics remain unacceptably high at 27.6 percent and 25.3 percent, respectively.

In 2005, I founded the Congressional Out of Poverty Caucus because of the rising tide of poverty. Some of us saw this unfortunate day coming. That was beginning under the failed policies of the previous administration.

Of course, we also know the terrible economic impact of the massive financial crisis that they left us on their way out of office. With the swift efforts of President Obama and congressional Democrats, we are finally beginning to dig ourselves out of the hole that was left by the Bush administration and slowly moving the poverty rate in the right direction.

Mr. Speaker, we must do more and we can do more.

One of the most critical responsibilities we have as a government is to